

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE  
Transcriber's Office  
FLOOR DEBATE

April 7, 2005

LB 480

product, like cigarettes. And as an aside, if someone were to put an amendment on here to ban cigarettes in the state or make them illegal, I would probably support that. I don't know if somebody will or not, but I probably would support that. But we nibble around the periphery, as we so often do, feel good making things, you know, making it sound like we really want to do the right thing, and actually we're being hypocritical. I don't know how much money the state receives in cigarette tax revenue. We had a bill this morning where we give out \$52 million a year because of cigarette taxes. Pretty much all the cities and communities in this state receive cigarette tax revenues. I'm...I would imagine it's in the tens of millions of dollars, but we don't have the courage to ban it. It doesn't even make sense. I think that's kind of hypocritical. But I don't see how an input to methamphetamine is big government as it relates to a legal product. And Senator Redfield mentioned that we're trying to protect the workers. Well, if you look at Lincoln's ban, we had an individual who came in to the Judiciary Committee and he has a one-man welding shop. He can't smoke in his own garage, basically, where he welds, and he thought that was unfair and I tend to agree with him. Further, when you look at the unemployment rate in our state, I would think that pretty much anyone who has a job...anyone who wants a job has one, and if you are in a facility that allows smoking and you don't like it, you can go to one of the 3,000 other facilities in this state that don't have smoking and get a job. So I don't buy that argument at all. I don't buy the argument that someone has a right to go to a nice dinner and have a smoke-free environment. Similar to term limits, I think your remedy, when you talk about term limits, I think your remedy is at the ballot box. If you don't like what a candidate is doing or has done, the lazy way to get rid of them is to vote for term limits so you don't have to deal with it. The proper way, in my mind, is to go and actively campaign against them. So I just fail...I don't understand that. If I'm working at a place and I don't like the environment, I'm going to make the statement with my feet and I'm going to move on. Given the unemployment environment here, I think it's logical or reasonable to assume that people can find a job if they really want one. With that, would Senator Thompson yield to a question or two?